

Roger Smith_email_Referral mechanism.txt

From: Roger Smith <rsmith@rogersmith.info>
To: Diana Marian <dmarian@soros.md>
Date: Tuesday, November 26, 2013, 10:48:52 AM
Subject: Referral mechanism
Files: <none>

Diana,

Diana,

Thanks for this. I look forward to the project.
Roger

On 26 Nov 2013, at 07:08, Diana Marian <dmarian@soros.md> wrote:

> Dear Roger,
>
> you were selected as the international expert who will assist the NLAC in
> developing the referral mechanism within the legal aid system and
> outside its range in Moldova.
>
> The national working group members responsible for drafting the referral
mechanism are:
> 1. Lilian Darii - the part related to referral of beneficiaries from
> paralegals to LA lawyers
> 2. Nadejda Hriptievschi - the part related to referral outside the
> LA system (private lawyers, notaries, social protection/assistance
> institutions and other organizations and specialists).
>
> They should both send you their draft documents by the end of
> November.
>
> As mentioned in the terms of reference, your tasks consist in the
> following:
>
> The selected candidate will consult the members of the WG on reviewing
> and developing the referral mechanism. He or she will provide detailed
> recommendations for the improvement of the mechanism. In addition, the
> consultant will develop a policy brief regarding the further interaction
> of paralegals with the legal aid system. The brief will contain
recommendations
> regarding the key issue associated with referral: identifying the most
reasonable
> and cost-efficient mechanism to connect paralegals and their beneficiaries
with
> the legal aid system, private specialists and public institutions. The issue
can
> be analyzed from a top down and from a bottom up perspective. The
recommendations
> should be made both on the legislative and the practice level.
>
> At the end of the term agreed upon, the selected candidate will deliver:
> 1. a set of recommendations on the referral mechanism drafted by the members
of the Working Group;
> 2. a policy brief regarding the further connection of primary legal aid
service providers to the
> overall legal aid scheme, private specialists and public institutions.
>
>
> Please let me know if I can be of any help.
>
> Thank you,
> Diana
>
>
> --

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> Diana Marian
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> "Legal Empowerment of Rural
> Communities through a Network
> of Community-based Paralegals",
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From: Roger Smith <rsmith@rogersmith.info>
To: Diana Marian <dmarian@soros.md>
Date: Thursday, January 30, 2014 11:47:08 AM
Subject: Paper
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Brilliant.

I attach:

- (a) final report
- (b) invoice and activity report.

Hope this is OK. I have written a report on the use of digital technology around the world on legal aid with Alan Paterson. We are publishing next week. When I get a pdf of the final report I will send you a copy. The existence of the Moldova site is really interesting.

Roger

Memorandum on Paralegal Referrals

Draft/1 December 2013

Roger Smith

Purpose

1. The purpose of this memorandum is to guide paralegals in the appropriate way to make referrals and to provide for monitoring.

Role

2. The work of paralegals is governed by the National Legal Aid Council's (NLAC) regulation approved on 15th June 2011 with which all paralegals should be familiar.

3. A paralegal is a person who, after special training, is qualified to provide primary legal aid to members of the community from legal aid funds. A paralegal must keep adequate records of their work and maintain regular contact with the Territorial Office and lawyers in the area where they work. They will be evaluated and monitored on the quantity and quality of such interactions and of their referrals to the Territorial Office and the National Legal Aid Council.

4. A paralegal may:

1. give primary legal aid to a beneficiary;
2. refer a beneficiary to a private lawyer;
3. refer a beneficiary to a Legal Aid Territorial Office for the purpose of obtaining qualified legal aid;
4. refer a beneficiary to another institution or person;
5. decline to assist a potential beneficiary.

5. Primary legal aid is defined (in the Legal Aid Law 2007) as 'the provision of information regarding the legal system of the Republic of Moldova, the normative acts in force, the rights and the obligations of subjects of law, the method of enforcing and exercising the persons' rights both in the judicial and extrajudicial proceedings; delivering counseling on legal issues; delivering assistance in drafting juridical acts; delivering other forms of legal aid that do not constitute qualified legal aid'.

6. Paralegals, therefore, must be ready to give general legal information on any subject.

7. Paralegals must, however, be careful not to give advice on matters which are the speciality of lawyers and defined as the proper subject of qualified legal aid: namely, the delivery of legal services of counseling, representation and/or defense before the criminal investigation bodies, courts of law in criminal cases, administrative offences cases, civil cases or cases of administrative jurisdiction, as well as representation before the public administration authorities. These kinds of cases must be referred.

8. In addition, a paralegal should refuse to assist when s/he feels that his/her professional qualification is insufficient to allow him/her properly to help a beneficiary.

9. Primary legal aid allows a wider range of activity (in Article 22 of the regulation relating to paralegals) than simply giving advice and making referrals [DO YOU WANT TO MAKE MORE OF THIS?]. A paralegal may:

- provide information and offer consultation upon request of the community residents;
- mediate, upon request, the conflicts between community members;
- organise seminars and public lectures on different topics related to their professional competence;
- offer information to community members in order to prevent problems of a legal nature or conflicts;
- participate, within the limits provided by law, in local decision-making processes;
- other competencies provided by law in the legal aid field and the current regulation.

10. [DO YOU WANT TO ADD THIS?] The law on legal aid contains the following requirements relating the work of a paralegal (Article 18):

- (1) To obtain primary legal aid, the applicant addresses to the authorized persons ... within the area of his or her permanent domicile, a verbal or written request.
- (2) Primary legal aid is delivered immediately upon request. When the immediate legal aid delivery is impossible, the applicant shall be informed on the date and time of the meeting that is to take place within a term that will not exceed 3 days from the date when the written or verbal request was submitted.

(3) The person, who requests primary legal aid, has the right to apply with one and the same problem only once, except for cases when new relevant circumstances are discovered.

(4) If a conflict of interests is detected, the person, who delivers primary legal aid, has the right to continue the delivery of these services with the permission of the applicant, or to indicate the existing possibilities to obtain it from other authorities or competent persons.

(5) If, during the delivery of primary legal aid, it is discovered that there is a need to deliver qualified legal aid, the applicant is informed about the conditions, on which he or she can receive such aid, and, upon request, he or she shall be assisted in writing the request for qualified legal aid delivery.

(6) The recording of primary legal aid is kept by the person, who delivers it, in a register that includes the name and the surname of the applicant, his or her personal data, the domicile address, the issue, for which a solution primary legal aid was requested, the length of the meeting and the outcome of the provided consultation. If the applicant makes a verbal request, the proof for primary legal aid delivery is recorded by his or her signature put in the registry.

11. [DO YOU WANT TO ADD ANYTHING ABOUT THE THREE DAY LIMIT?]

Knowledge and skills

12. A paralegal needs the following knowledge and skills, which will be the subject of initial training and continuing professional development:

1. Familiarity with the legal framework related to the procedure of submitting requests for legal aid and eligibility criteria, including:
 - o Law on Legal Aid No. 128 of 27.07.2007;
 - o Regulation on the functioning of Territorial Offices of the NLAC, approved by the NLAC decision No. 15 of 30.07.2008;
 - o Regulation on the paralegal's activity, approved by the NLAC decision No. 5 of 15.06.2011;
 - o Regulation on the methodology for calculating the income for providing state qualified legal aid, approved by the decision of the Government No. 1016 of 01.09.2008.
2. Practical drafting skills for such documents as:
 - o request for qualified legal aid;
 - o declarations concerning incomes and its annexes.

3. Knowledge of contact details and working schedules of NLAC Territorial Offices.

4. [GOOD HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS?]

Primary legal aid

13. The paralegal should inform beneficiaries of primary legal aid about the categories of services provided and about his/her special professional qualification. [DO YOU WANT TO SAY MORE ABOUT THE MATTERS SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 5 ABOVE. DOES THE PARALEGAL NEED TO KNOW, FOR EXAMPLE, ABOUT RELEVANT LOCAL PROVISION IN TERMS OF STATE OFFICES, COUNCILLORS ETC.?]

13A. DO YOU WANT TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT RECORD KEEPING TO EXPAND 10(d).

Referral: general

14. The purpose of a referral is to help beneficiary to solve his/her problem and to provide as much assistance as is possible to the institution to whom s/he is referred. In making a referral the paralegal should ensure that:

- (1) the referral is properly made;
- (2) the beneficiary understands why he/she is being referred;
- (3) what the beneficiary now has to do;
- (4) as much information as possible is available to the institution to which the beneficiary has been referred;
- (5) [WHEREVER POSSIBLE AND APPROPRIATE AN APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN MADE FOR THE BENEFICIARY IN RELATION TO THEIR REFERRAL?]. DO YOU WANT TO ADD SOMETHING LIKE THE WORDS IN BOLD?

15. A matter should only be recorded as a 'referral' when a referral is actually made and not when a paralegal provides only advice on options to a beneficiary and leaves them to decide which to take. In that case, the paralegal shall record the consultation provided in the primary legal aid registry and in the monthly report under the category 'consultation' and not as a 'referral request'.

Referral to a lawyer or the Territorial Office of the NLAC

16. Primary legal aid may be unable fully to solve a beneficiary's legal problem. In that case, assistance may be required which can only be provided only by a licensed lawyer. If a person has sufficient means they can be referred direct to a lawyer. It seems likely that they be eligible for qualified legal aid then they should submit a request to the NLAC Territorial Office for the appointment of a lawyer.
17. The paralegal can only advise on entitlement to qualified legal aid; the decision is taken by the NLAC Territorial Office. The paralegal should refer the beneficiary to the NLAC Territorial Office when information provided by the beneficiary indicates that he/she might be eligible for qualified legal aid. In case of doubt, paralegal shall still refer the beneficiary.
18. Where a beneficiary is clearly not entitled to qualified legal aid, the paralegal should recommend a lawyer to take over the case on the basis of a private contract. The paralegal may not recommend a particular lawyer. The paralegal can only provide the beneficiary with a list of names and contact details of lawyers in the locality where the beneficiary lives or works. A paralegal may, however, mention any relevant specialism of a lawyer on the list.
19. Any recommendation of a private lawyer must be documented, and a respective note should be included in the paralegal's registry recording primary legal aid. The registry shall include short description of the type of case or the problem of the beneficiary and the reasons for recommending a lawyer (this documentation shall be similar with the referral to other public and private institutions).
20. In making a referral for qualified legal aid, a paralegal has three overall tasks:
 1. informational - telling possible beneficiaries about the possibility of receiving qualified legal aid;
 2. filtering - verifying whether beneficiaries of primary legal aid comply with the eligibility requirements for qualified legal aid and, thereby, diminishing the number of unfunded requests addressed to Territorial Offices of the NLAC; and
 3. advising and assisting - by providing necessary assistance to the beneficiary in the process of drafting necessary documents, as well as putting together and submitting the file to the respective Territorial Office.
- Filtering requests for legal aid
21. In filtering the requests for qualified legal aid, a paralegal should:
 1. carry out preliminary verifications to check whether potential beneficiary meets necessary conditions for receiving qualified legal aid;
 2. assist the beneficiary in drafting the request for qualified legal aid and the related documents that need to be submitted to the respective Territorial Office;
 3. refer persons who need qualified legal aid to the Territorial Offices of the NLAC, when conditions established by the law for benefiting from free or partially free legal aid are met.
22. In order to verify eligibility for qualified legal aid, paralegal needs to consecutively perform the following actions:
 1. Establish the type of the case where legal aid is required: criminal, administrative or civil (including administrative offence);
 2. Establish the category of persons provided by Article 19 paragraph (1)(a-e) of the Law on Legal Aid, to which the potential beneficiary belongs;
 3. Preliminarily verify the existence of any ground to refuse provision of qualified legal aid regulated by Article 24 paragraph 1) and 1') of the Law on Legal Aid;
 4. Establish, depending on the type and nature of the case, whether the case where potential beneficiary is involved belongs to the category of cases where qualified legal aid is provided regardless of the level of persons' incomes (Article 20 of the Law) or depending of the level of their incomes (Article 21 of the Law);
 5. In situations where legal aid for the requested case is provided regardless of the level of persons' incomes (Article 20 of the Law), paralegal shall assist the beneficiary in filling in the request for providing qualified legal aid;
 6. In situations where legal aid for the requested case is provided depending on the level of persons' incomes (Article 21 of the Law), it is necessary to preliminarily carry out a financial test.
- Providing assistance to an applicant
23. In order to provide assistance, the paralegal needs to perform the following actions:
 1. Establish the type of the case where legal aid is required: criminal, administrative or civil (including administrative offence);
 2. Establish the category of persons provided by Article 19 paragraph 1) letter (a-e) of the Law on Legal Aid, to which the potential beneficiary belongs;
 3. Preliminarily verify the existence of a ground to refuse provision of qualified legal aid regulated by Article 24 paragraph 1) and 1') of the Law on Legal Aid;
 4. Establish, depending on the type and nature of the case, whether the case where potential beneficiary is involved belongs to the category of cases where qualified legal aid is provided regardless of the level of persons' incomes (Article 20 of the Law) or depending of the level of their incomes (Article 21 of the Law);
 5. In situations where legal aid for the requested case is provided regardless of the level of persons' incomes (Article 20 of the Law), paralegal shall assist the beneficiary in filling in the request for providing qualified legal aid;

6. In situations where legal aid for the requested case is provided depending on the level of persons' incomes (Article 21 of the Law), it is necessary to preliminarily carry out a financial test.
24. In order to assist in the financial test, paralegal shall request the potential beneficiary to submit the following original documents:
 1. Certificate on family composition (in rural areas this certificate is issued by the mayor's office);
 2. Certificate from the place/places of work indicating monthly incomes received in the last 6 months by the family members who are able to work;
 3. Certificate from the National Social Insurance House indicating monthly social allowances received by the family members.
25. Taking into account the information from the submitted documents and information directly submitted by the potential beneficiary, the paralegal shall provide assistance in the process of preliminarily calculating and introducing data in the declaration on incomes on the following basis:
 1. For the calculation of monthly average income, the paralegal shall take into consideration the income for 6 calendar months receive, prior to the month when the request was submitted, by all family members of the applicant who live together, who share common household and common budget;
 2. In cases when paralegal establishes that the monthly average income is lower than the minimum subsistence level per capita in the country, the paralegal shall inform the applicant that he/she is [LIKELY TO BE?] eligible and can receive qualified legal aid;
 3. In cases when paralegal establishes that the monthly average income is higher than the minimum subsistence level per capita in the country, paralegal shall inform the applicant that he/she is [UNLIKELY] not [TO BE?] eligible to receive qualified legal aid and that he/she can address a licensed lawyer from the respective locality in order to receive necessary assistance and pay for the respective services from his/her own resources;
 4. Taking into consideration that the minimum subsistence level is determined based on calculations carried out by the National Bureau of Statistics, paralegal shall quarterly verify changes in the minimum subsistence level on the web page of the respective institution;
 5. The Paralegal shall inform and explain to the beneficiary that information indicated in the declaration must be verified and in case it is established that information indicated in the declaration is false or if, after communicating this information, the beneficiary's financial situation improve in such a manner that will deprive him/her from the right to benefit of qualified legal aid, beneficiary must pay back all the costs incurred by the state in relation to providing the respective qualified legal aid;
 6. In case it is established that the person requesting qualified legal aid is eligible, paralegal shall assist him/her in filling in the request addressed to the respective Territorial Office for delivery of qualified legal aid, according to the template approved by the NLAC;
 7. The paralegal shall assist the applicant in putting together the file that needs to be submitted to the NLAC Territorial Office, which is composed of the request and, when necessary, declaration-type on incomes and its annex.
26. Paralegals should note that they only provide assistance only in the process of filling in the necessary documents, without signing them personally.
- Referral to a Territorial Office
27. After the file is complete, paralegal shall inform the applicant about the place where Territorial Office is situated and shall indicate its full address and working schedule. In situations when the applicant for qualified legal aid encounters difficulties in travelling to the locality where the premises of the Territorial Office are situated (for example, because of disease, age, lack of money, weather conditions, etc.), paralegal can send the file to the Territorial Office by using electronic communication devices (fax, email) or can help the applicant to send the file by post.
28. If possible, the paralegal shall check whether the person referred to the Territorial Office has actually addressed the respective office, whether his/her request was admitted and whether the problem was finally solved following intervention of the lawyer.
29. Any referral of the applicant for qualified legal aid to the Territorial Offices needs to be documented, and:
 1. a respective note should be included in the paralegal's registry for record of primary legal aid;
 2. in the monthly and quarterly activity report, the paralegal shall indicate the total number of referrals to the Territorial Offices in the respective section.
30. In the process of monitoring and evaluating the activity of paralegals, responsible persons from the Territorial Office shall check the veracity of data, the correctness of applying the norms and recommendations concerning verification of the eligibility criteria, as well as referral of the applicants to the Offices.
- Referral other than to a Territorial Office

31. The Paralegal shall refer the beneficiary of primary legal aid to other public or private institutions in cases when he/she reasonably assumes, based on the information submitted by the beneficiary, that the respective institution is competent to solve the problem of the beneficiary.
32. In order to refer the beneficiaries to public or private institutions, paralegal shall keep a Registry with contact details of the potential public and private institutions, which needs to be continuously filled out.
33. Referral to a certain public or private institution requires formulation by paralegal of a written recommendation concerning the responsible institution, which needs to be issued to the beneficiary. In cases when beneficiary requires such recommendation or when paralegal considers it necessary to formulate the respective recommendation in written form.
34. When possible, it is recommended that in case of referring beneficiary to a certain public or private institution, paralegal shall monitor, within at least 6 months after the referral, the developments in the process of solving the beneficiary's problem. This is necessary in order to assess the impact of the referral carried out by the paralegal on the beneficiaries. The paralegal may follow the developments in resolution of the beneficiary's problem by applying the most appropriate methods for each individual case (for instance, discussions with the beneficiary or his/her family members, discussions with the institution where the beneficiary was referred).
35. In cases when, from the facts and information submitted by the beneficiary, it reasonably results that one or several public or private institutions have necessary competence, paralegal shall refer the beneficiary to the respective institution and explain in details the reason of referral and the way to find the respective institution.
36. The paralegal shall draft written recommendation to the beneficiary, indicating the reasons for referral to the appropriate institution (institutions). In case when beneficiary requires such a recommendation or paralegal considers that its written formulation is necessary, Recommendation shall be issued to the beneficiary the same day or up to 3 days from the day when beneficiary addressed a paralegal.
37. When paralegal needs additional information from the beneficiary, paralegal may request the latter to submit the necessary information. In this case, recommendation concerning referral to a public or private institution shall be drafted within 3 days after receiving the requested information.
38. Any referral of the persons requesting qualified legal aid to other public or private institutions needs to be documented, and a respective note should be included in the paralegal's registry for record of primary legal aid. In the annual and quarterly activity report, paralegal shall indicate the total number of referrals to public or private institutions in the respective section.
39. If possible, paralegal shall check whether the person referred to other institutions has actually addressed the respective institution/institutions and what was the final solution.
40. In the process of monitoring and evaluating the activity of paralegal, responsible persons from the Territorial Office shall check the veracity of data, the correctness of applying the norms and recommendations concerning verification of the eligibility criteria, as well as referral of the applicants to other institutions.

Paralegals in Moldova: a briefing for policy discussion

Roger Smith

1. The purpose of this short paper is to raise issues for discussion concerning the future of paralegals operating in Moldova as part of the system of state-guaranteed legal aid. Decisions might be taken on at the following issues (there may be others to be considered as well):
 1. the work to be undertaken by paralegals and its level;
 2. the location of the paralegals in terms of whether there would be an advantage in bringing them together in regional centres;
 3. whether the paralegals should be centrally organised within a stand alone structure and what might be provided within that structure;
 4. the establishment of a review team to consider these issues.
 2. Paralegals may be individuals with contracts approved by the National Council for State Guaranteed Legal Aid (NCLA) to provide primary legal aid. They may 'associate in consulting agencies' (Article 16(2) Law on State Guaranteed Legal Aid 2007). Primary legal aid may also be provided by 'non-governmental organisations specialised in the field of the legal aid delivery' under Article 17. Such organisations can receive grants to fund their activities from the National Council.
 3. Primary legal aid is defined, in turn, by Article 2 as the 'provision of information regarding the legal system of the Republic of Moldova, the normative acts in force, the rights and the obligations of subjects of law, the method of enforcing and exercising the persons' rights both in the judicial and extrajudicial proceedings; delivering counselling on legal issues; delivering assistance in drafting juridical acts; delivering other forms of legal aid that do not constitute qualified legal aid'. Accordingly, this is a very wide brief.
 4. A secondary purpose of the paralegals, at least in the mind of the external donors who initially funded them was that their work would advance legal empowerment.
 5. The latest available statistics on the work of the paralegals suggests that they undertook 1369 cases over a recent six month period. The three largest individual areas of work concerned civil law (including property and neighbour disputes) 25 per cent; social protection (21 per cent) and documentation/civil status (10 per cent).
 6. The paralegals responded to demand in a wide range of ways: 25 per cent referrals (other than to the NCLAC); 2 per cent referrals to the NCLAC; 13 per cent acts of assistance such as phone calls and around 5 per cent with a mixture of mediation and community resolution.
 7. The most recent source of information on the operation of the paralegal project comes from a report by Nadejda Hripilevici published in 2012, *Establishment of Community-based Paralegals in Moldova - main conclusions and recommendations based on a two year project* (the 'Paralegals research').
 8. In October 2013, a delegation from the NCLAC visited London in order to examine the structure of paralegal advice in the UK. The main features of this are:
 1. one national paralegal advice NGO (Citizens Advice) which operates a central resource for training and information support for a national network of advice agencies branded as Citizens Advice Bureaux.
 2. two national sources of information, available on the internet (advice.gov.uk and citizensadvice.org.uk that may be consulted by individuals or, with supplementation, used as a resource for advisers.
 3. a central information system available in each CAB and kept up to date by the central office.
 4. a range of individual advice centres, some geographically centred and some subject based.
 5. the use of volunteers as a major part of the Citizens Advice network.
- The work undertaken: the need for more pilot experience
9. Prior research on legal need in Moldova suggested that the following were the major areas in which legal problems arose (Gramatikov *Met and Umet Needs in Moldova* Soros Foundation Moldova 2012).

Neighbour disputes	15
Family	14

Consumer	9
Land	8
Medical	8
Employment	7
Social protection	7

10. It is difficult to use these statistics to see if the paralegals were meeting the need previously identified because different categories were used for their statistics. However, it seems that broadly they are.
11. To someone familiar with the scheme in England and Wales, the interesting thing about the paralegal structure in Moldova is the breadth of approach expected from the paralegals. Their role can vary between the provision of information to the carrying out of mediation. The statistics suggest that the paralegals are, in fact, working as widely as expected. However, the very breadth of the role underlines the value of the recommendation in the Paralegals research for further testing of the paralegal scheme for another 3-4 years within the framework of a demonstration project.¹ If paralegals can really deliver this breadth of provision, it would be a major success for Moldovan legal aid and it would seem sensible to take the necessary time to explore the capabilities of the paralegals and to build up their experience. This is particularly so given the legal empowerment objective. It might be helpful to encourage discussion among the paralegals themselves as to which of a variety of techniques might be best for particular problems. It would be sensible if, and this may already been done, they workshoped dummy or even real problems between themselves to identify those disputes that they might be able to resolve.
12. A number of further issues arise in relation to the Moldovan paralegals when their position is compared with that of England and Wales. They include the following:
 - (a) Location
 13. The Moldovan paralegals are largely based in rural locations. In England and Wales, most advice provision is based in regional centres, from which satellite services are delivered. This is, for example, the case in relation to Carlsie Law Centre which is set in a very rural and mountainous area of northern England as the visiting delegation heard. The advantage of a regional base is that the paralegals would potentially be less isolated. On the other hand, they might lose the close connection with a particular locality. Existing paralegals might face disruption if their existing base of operation was changed. A decision would need to be made about the comparative advantage of a degree of regionalisation.
 - (b) Organisation
 14. The paralegals are currently given centralised training and centralised management. This would seem essential. There are also centralised manuals. It is evident that there are benefits from working together. That raises the question of how this should be developed. An attractive option might be if the paralegals were to become structured within an overall NGO, as would be allowed under the appropriate legislation, and, thus, management, training and standards dealt with internally to it as they are within the Citizens Advice movement in England and Wales.
 15. An alternative might be for the NCLAC to take the role of managing the paralegals. However, that might be too much of a strain for its limited central resources.
 - (c) Central staffing and resources
 16. Experience would suggest that the success of geographically dispersed paralegals who are working largely on their own depends critically on good centralised management and resources. It seems from the Paralegals research as if this is currently being provided; it must be maintained in any continuation beyond the existing pilot. The maximisation of the role of the paralegals will depend upon their being harnessed together.
 - (d) Expanding the information role
 17. In England and Wales, an increasingly important function of the paralegal organisations is the provision of information over the web to a wider range of people than can be reached individually. This raises an interesting question for Moldova - at what point is it worth thinking about providing citizens with online advice. It seems that Moldova's libraries will soon have access through the work of Bill and Melinda Gates' charity.¹ In this context, it is interesting to see the development of the paralegalist and site as a national resource.
 18. If the site is a success, this will be a further pressure on centralising the organisation of the paralegals.

¹ <http://www.irex.org/news/free-public-access-internet-expands-moldova-libraries>

Conclusion

21. Whatever preliminary view is taken of the matters set out above, it would seem desirable that the position of the paralegals be reviewed within the grant period of their current funding so that the lessons are maximised. This might be done through an external evaluation but consideration might be given to the formation of a review team composed of one or more of the paralegals themselves, the NLAC and the Soros Foundation Moldova. The aim would be a quick report within two or three months which examined the issues above and any others thought to be relevant. Its purpose would be to affect the future development of the paralegals within the legal aid system.